

Press Release



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16th Annual Missouri River Bluegrass and Old Time Music Festival Scheduled for July 14-16

Cross Ranch State Park's Missouri River Bluegrass & Old Time Music Festival features two headline bluegrass bands from the west coast as well as many regional and area performers. The festival, in its 16th year, is scheduled for July 14, 15 and 16 at Cross Ranch State Park, located across the Missouri River from Washburn, ND. Family-style entertainment is featured on the main stage, a Kid's Fest is scheduled for young children, and music workshops and acoustic music jam sessions add to the festivities. Main stage entertainment is scheduled from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. on Friday, 1 to 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, and a gospel show is scheduled from 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Main stage performers include the California group, Chris Stuart & Backcountry (Friday/Saturday); Brothers Keeper of Washington state (Saturday/Sunday); Jack Norton and the Mullet River Boys from Minnesota (Friday/Saturday); Canadian Dan Frechette (Friday/Saturday); DW Groethe from Montana (Saturday); and from North Dakota—the Center Community Band with the Pfliger Sisters (Saturday), Sisters of the North (Friday/Sunday), Keith Bear (Friday), and the Baptist Boys (Sunday).

Chris Stuart and Backcountry have performed bluegrass music in the US, Canada, Oman, and the United Kingdom and have earned several accolades for their music including being chosen as a 2004 International Bluegrass Showcase Band. They have had songs from four albums appear on the bluegrass, folk, and Americana charts and Chris Stuart has won many awards for his songwriting. The group will also be teaching at the 6th annual Missouri River Bluegrass Camp just prior to the Festival. Call 701-524-2210 for details about the camp.

Brothers Keeper is a bluegrass-gospel band from Seattle, where their hard-driving sound has made them a regional favorite. The band features hot picking and tight harmonies on bluegrass and bluegrass-gospel favorites, along with several original songs.

Jack Norton and the Mullet River Boys are best described as a "Musical Variety Show" that appeals to all ages—with bluegrass, Dixieland swing, vaudeville and country comedy influences. The boys have been called "one of the most entertaining acoustic groups in the Midwest" by the Minneapolis Star Tribune, and bandleader Jack Norton was called "the greatest entertainer I have ever seen" by the one and only Tiny Tim.

Dan Frechette is a young Winnipeg-based singer/songwriter with an affinity for bluegrass, Celtic, country, ragtime, and country blues, accompanying himself on guitar, mandolin, and harmonica. He's been a full-time songwriter for EMI, busked on street corners in America and Europe, and played solo at the Winnipeg Folk Festival.

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Play in our backyard!

In 2005 cowboy poet/musician/philosopher DW Groethe performed at the Library of Congress American Folklife Center, on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, and at the 67th National Folk Festival. A favorite from previous Missouri River Festivals, DW will emcee, along with performing on Saturday this year.

Kid's Fest activities take place all three days with games, races, movies and more. Youngsters can sign up at the park's Visitor Center.

Main stage ticket prices are \$10 for Friday evening, \$16 for Saturday, and \$10 for Sunday afternoon. A three-day festival pass costs \$30. Children (16 & under) are admitted free when accompanied by an adult. Festival-goers are advised to bring along blankets, lawn chairs, bug spray, sunscreen, rain gear and a flashlight for the evening concerts. No alcohol, smoking or pets are allowed in the concert area and no audio taping is permitted. Videotaping requires prior approval. An overflow camping area is available at the park, and food vendors and a shuttle service will be provided. The performances will be held rain or shine.

Sponsors include the Center ND Community Club, ND Parks & Recreation Department, Bluegrass & Ol' Time Music Association of North Dakota, Washburn Lions, Bill's Super Valu in Washburn, the Milk & Honey Market in Center, and the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center. This activity is sponsored in part by a grant from the North Dakota Council on the Arts, which receives funding from the State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Cross Ranch State Park is located on the west side of the Missouri River between Center and Washburn. Because of safety and dust problems, visitors are asked not to use any of the gravel roads, but to use either Highway 83 or Highway 25, then follow the brown park directional signs. For more festival information call Cross Ranch State Park, 701-794-3731.